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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 001589

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/28/2012

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [EUN](#)

SUBJECT: BALKANS: GOI ON ASSISTANCE FOR BOSNIAN MILITARY
DOWNSIZING, SUPPORT FOR ALBANIA

REF: STATE 52433

CLASSIFIED BY: POL MC TOM COUNTRYMAN. REASON:1.5 (B)(C).

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PAGE 02 ROME 01589 281828Z
[1](#)1. (C) GUIDANCE REQUEST. SEE PARA 3.

[1](#)2. (C) THE MFA'S BALKANS OFFICE DIRECTOR, MAURIZIO MASSARI, TOLD POLOFF ON MARCH 27 THAT THE GOI WILL MAKE A FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION'S PROGRAM TO HELP REINTEGRATE THE 10,000 BIH SOLDIERS TO BE DISCHARGED BY 1 APRIL. MASSARI WAS AWARE OF THE IOM'S PROGRAM (AS DESCRIBED IN REFTTEL), AND THE GOI IS VERY SUPPORTIVE OF THE INITIATIVE. MASSARI DID NOT HAVE AN AMOUNT OR TIMING ON THE CONTRIBUTION, BUT ASSURED POLOFF THAT THE ISSUE WAS UNDER DISCUSSION IN THE MFA'S ECONOMIC COOPERATION DEPARTMENT. THE REINTEGRATION FUNDS, ALONG WITH OTHER PROJECTS AIMED AT BOSNIAN YOUTHS AND ESTABLISHING COMMUNITY CENTERS, WERE HIGH ON THE LIST OF THE GOI'S PRIORITIES FOR ASSISTANCE TO BOSNIA.

[1](#)3. (C) TURNING TO ALBANIA, MASSARI THOUGHT THAT IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO THE NEW MAJKO GOVERNMENT TO GET A "SHOW OF SUPPORT" FROM THE WEST. MASSARI WILL ATTEND THE APRIL 17 FRIENDS OF ALBANIA MEETING IN VIENNA, AND WILL BE CRAFTING A GOI STATEMENT WHICH, WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING ALBANIA'S PROBLEMS, WILL CONTAIN POSITIVE ELEMENTS TO BOLSTER MAJKO. MASSARI ACKNOWLEDGED POLOFF'S POINT THAT THERE WAS NOT MUCH NEWS COMING OUT OF TIRANA TO CHEER ABOUT, PARTICULARLY IN THE AREA OF ECONOMIC REFORM, BUT INSISTED THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO GIVE A POSITIVE SIGNAL, PERHAPS JUST AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF ALBANIA'S RELATIVE POLITICAL STABILITY. MASSARI ASKED WHETHER THE U.S. COULD ALSO DELIVER A STATEMENT WITH A "POSITIVE TONE" AT THE FOA. POLOFF PROMISED TO CHECK WITH WASHINGTON AND GET BACK TO MASSARI.

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PAGE 03 ROME 01589 281828Z
[1](#)4. (C) MASSARI SAID THAT ANOTHER WAY TO GIVE SUPPORT TO THE MAJKO GOVERNMENT WOULD BE THE MAINTENANCE OF AN INTERNATIONAL MILITARY PRESENCE IN ALBANIA, SPECIFICALLY THE APPROXIMATELY 1350 NATO FORCES (1200 OF WHOM ARE ITALIAN) CURRENTLY DEPLOYED TO ALBANIA IN COMMZ WEST. MASSARI WAS AWARE OF DISCUSSIONS IN BRUSSELS TO RESTRUCTURE FORCES DEPLOYED IN THE BALKANS, BUT HOPED THAT THERE WOULD BE NO SIGNIFICANT REDUCTION IN ALBANIA. MASSARI SAID THAT THE GOI WOULD BE MAKING A FORMAL DEMARCHE ON THIS ISSUE IN BRUSSELS AND NATO CAPITALS SOMETIME SOON.
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